# GROUND ZERO

# September 1993

Volume 1, No. 6

Office: 1-719 635-6086
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| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 1<br>Diversity Chorus 6:30p | 2 | 3<br>Monthly Vigil 8p Acacia Park<br>Smokebrush Video 8p | 4 |
| 5 | 6 | 7<br>Fundraising 5:30p | 8<br>Diversity Chorus 6:30p | 9 | 10 | 11<br>C.U.R.E. RALLY Fundraiser |
| 12<br>Town Meeting 7p Worner Ctr Colorado College | 13 | 14<br>Fundraising 5:30p | 15<br>NEWSLETTER DEADLINE<br>Diversity Chorus 6:30p | 16<br>*A Piece of My Heart* Sept 16 - Oct 23 Denver Civic Theatre | 17<br>C.U.R.E. RALLY Fundraiser Penthouse | 18<br>C.U.R.E. RALLY Fundraiser True Colors |
| 19 | 20 | 21<br>Fundraising 5:30p | 22<br>Diversity Chorus 6:30p | 23 | 24 | 25<br>C.U.R.E. RALLY Fundraiser |
| 26 | 27 | 28<br>PPGLCC Annual Meeting 7p<br>Fundraising 5:30p | 29<br>Diversity Chorus 6:30p | 30<br>*La Cage Aux Folles* Denver Civic Theatre | October 1<br>Musica Femina Unitarian Church 8 p | |

**Future dates, times and event information need to be dropped off at the Ground Zero office by the 15 th of the month . Be a patriot !! Join our fight against discrimination. Become a member! Cost is only $10 !! And membership DOES have its privileges !!**

**SEPTEMBER 3, 8:00PM MONTHLY VIGIL, ACACIA PARK**

**SEPTEMBER 3, 8:00PM SMOKEBRUSH THEATRE, "GAY CIVIL RIGHTS IN COLORADO, THE UNCIVIL WAR"** A video presentation Tickets FREE

**SEPTEMBER 12, 7:00, WORNER CENTER, GAYLORD HALL.** Agenda will be sent out in a separate mailing. Call office for more information.

**SEPTEMBER 28, 7:00PM, GAYLORD HALL, CC, PPGLCC ANNUAL MEETING**

**OCTOBER 1, 8:00PM, UNITARIAN CHURCH, 730 NORTH TEJON,** Tickets $7 in advance, $8 at door, Robin Hood Productions presents a unique performance with Portland flute guitar duo **MUSICA FEMINA.** Musica Femina has captivated national and international audiences with their concert performance style presentations, which share not only the music, but the stories of the lives and challenges faced by women composers from the 17th century to today. This unique performance includes some of the earliest known musical works by women - works that are rarely included in either the teaching or the performance of classical music. Part of the proceeds from this event will be donated to Ground Zero. Ticket purchases can be made at Ground Zero office and Abaton Books.

*Calendar info continued on Page 2....*

*Calendar events continued from page 1....*

**If your hungry for the noise, the hustle and the bustle of a BIG CITY, head up north to the Denver Civic Theatre, 721 Santa Fe Drive (303) 595-3800. Listed below are some upcoming events.**

Opening September 16 and running through October 23 the Dorie Theatre presents the regional premiere of *A Piece of My Heart*, written by Shirley Lauro. This is the real story of the unsung heroes of Vietnam, the women who served there. The play covers the lives of six women over a twenty year period, from the sixties to the near present.

On September 30 the MainStage Theatre presents the Tony Award winning Broadway play *La Cage Aux Folles*, a musical comedy of life and love in St. Tropez. Need I say any more!!!!

Call The Denver Civic Theatre for ticket prices and additional details.

## FUNDRAISERS FOR THE C.U.R.E. RALLY

**SEPTEMBER 11, $3.00, LOCATION AND TIME TO BE ANNOUNCED** will be an evening of fun and music for all. Cindy Bee and Josie Mares will enthrall us with their storytelling ability while Lori Vasquez and Home Remedy will get out feet tapping with their musical talent. Please, join us as we bring together these four extraordinary talents on one stage. You can pickup tickets at the door or the Ground Zero office. Call office for more information.

**SEPTEMBER 17 AND 18, CONCERTS AT TRUE COLORS AND PENTHOUSE.** While the first band for Penthouse is not yet decided, Subtle Edge will be playing at True Colors on the 18th. Tickets for the event are $4 per evening, which will get you into both bars, or $7. for the entire weekend. This weekend will be filled with great music. The Penthouse will give free drinks tickets at the door on the evening of the 17th, and True Colors will do happy hour prices during the evening of the 18th. Come join us for a great weekend!

**SEPTEMBER 25, $5.00** will be an alternative music concert co sponsored by BGALA. Bands will include Element 308 and Evie's Edge. A third band is yet to be decided. This concert will probably take place at Armstrong Hall.

Sorry for the sketchy details. CURE is still in negotiations with performers. Call Ground Zero office for more detail.

Vendor booths will be available for rental at the C.U.R.E. Please contact Judi Johnson if you own a business and would like to rent a booth, or if you have a favorite vendor you'd like to see there. Contact Judi Johnson at the Bear Lodge in Manitou, 685-5685, or Linda at the office, 635-6086.

## GROUND ZERO SEEKS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

GROUND ZERO has determined that if it is to fulfill its mission in education, community outreach and coalition building, it must build its economic base. There are many projects awaiting funding including a video project with the people that gave us "Sacred Lies/Civil Truths" in New York. This video project will be called "Freedom of Truth" narrated by Susan Serandon. This video is designated specifically to answer "The Gay Agenda" to both the general public and gay and lesbian communities.

Add this to "Sacred Lies" and the newly released "Gay Civil Rights in Colorado/The Uncivil War" (from our own Donna Johnson-- good job Donna!) and we are beginning to build an impressive collection of educational materials to use in the continuous struggle against the misinformation flowing from the fundamentalist right.

We are in conversation with a major foundation to support a series of 20 to 30 minute videos under Ground Zero's sponsorship that will deal with many of the relevant issues relating to the religious right. They are very interested in a series that will be education, not confrontational, and that will find use with the naive as well as the informed audience. We envision 5-6 more videos that will receive national distribution.

Ground Zero is also looking for funding to support a major media campaign that will seek to identify who and what gays and lesbians really are in order to dispel the myth that gays and lesbian are a threat to the community. We have made contact with three or four foundations looking for support for this project. A major foundation has already expressed an interest.

Ground Zero has also begun a national campaign to raise funds among gay and lesbian communities across the nation. A final grant is being sought to support the administrative costs of the organization.

Ground Zero finds itself having to work diligently to make ends meet in the light of many significant events and activities that we are supporting. If there are those in the community who would like to assist with this challenge by making a contribution, we guarantee it will be put to good use!!!!!!

# LOCAL MINORITY COALITION CRITICIZES SHERIFF BERRY, VOWS TO CONTINUE CALL FOR CIVILIAN REVIEW BOARD

News Release from the Minority Coalition, July 21, 1993

Following the disclosure of conflicting reports in Gazette Telegraph's update story on the Francisco Cardona Case, (July 21st edition), The Colorado Springs Minority Coalition issued a statement severely criticizing El Paso County Sheriff Berry and other local authorities for failure to address what the Coalition calls pervasive and deep rooted problems of discrimination which exist in the Pikes Peak region.

Minority Coalition spokesperson James Tucker, President of the local chapter of the N.A.A.C.P. today is calling for the establishment of a Civilian Complaints Review Board, similar to the review board operating with reported excellence in the Washington, DC. area. According to Tucker, the Washington, DC. board has subpoena power, appeal rights, and other empowering capabilities. "Such an empowered board is necessary to establish confidence and trust between law enforcement agencies, such as the Sheriff's department and the Colorado Springs Police Department, and the Colorado Springs community at large."

The Cardona police dog attack case, states Tucker, is a case which underscores the need for the Pikes Peak region to immediately establish such a local civilian complaints review board. "The fact is, " states Tucker, "we need to act now, establish an impartial review board, and not continue to ignore blatant discrimination and the people's right to redress such discrimination."

States Tucker, "For our local sheriff to come up with a story, months later, that is completely contrary to the official report of n on-the-scene paramedic, it once again underscores our community's desperate need for effective local government monitoring and forced accountability. Tucker continues, "Sheriff Berry and his office refused to comment for almost a year when repeatedly asked for details on the Cardona case. The sheriff's office also refused to answer questions on whether or not any in house investigation had occurred or disciplinary action had been taken following the Sheriff's department's dog assault on Cardona in February of 1992."

"Now", states Tucker, "the Sheriff finally commented at a news conference yesterday, following the department's highest settlement ever reached in the amount of $160,000. Berry's statements yesterday regarding Cardona posing some kind of threat to the officers is totally in conflict with an official paramedic report written shortly after the incident occurred. The Minority Coalition questions that given the facts and evidence in the Cardona case, what permits Sheriff Berry to publicly commend and at least in on instance promote the officers involved in the Cardona dog assault?"

Another Minority Coalition member, Rita Ague, coordinator of the local disabled children's educational advocacy group United Parents, believes that the entire community should be made aware of "the pervasive discrimination that underlies and all too frequently overcomes this 'America the Beautiful' community."

At the open hearing recently conducted by the Minority Coalition, complaints were received that, according to Ague, make it clear that racial and numerous other forms of bigotry, discrimination and general failure to comply with federal and state statutes is a frightening element of daily life in El Paso County. "One Hispanic man reported to a hearing officer during Minority Coalition open hearings, that Sheriff Berry referred to the man a 'a wetback' in front of two impartial witnesses. And this is only one example of numerous discrimination based complaints we receive during our hearing and after the Cardona case settlement was made public on Monday. We in Minority Coalition are processing and directing these complaints currently. We will be offering what we determined be relevant and meritorious complaints to the FBI to assist them with their current investigation of the Cardona case."

According to both Tucker and Ague, the entire membership of the Minority Coalition, including all twenty of the Coalition's member groups, firmly believe it is time for city and county officials to stop the discrimination denial syndrome, denial which is costing the city and the county taxpayers millions of dollars and is causing Colorado Springs to deserve the title, The Hate City in the Hate State.

Additionally, the Minority Coalition believes that in order to correct a serious and ongoing problem it is first necessary to recognize that such a problem exists. States Tucker, "An effective civilian complaint board and a human right ordinance which will protect the right of citizens is long overdue. Our Coalition will not rest until these vital components are in place in Colorado Springs and El Paso County."

For further information, call James Tucker, 528-1954 and Rita Ague 598-3459.

**NOTICE**

**Inputs to the Ground Zero Newsletter are due NO LATER THAN the 15th of the Month... Thank You**

*"For I am coming back to you, my Dearest... You are always in my heart and in my longings. I've been so homesick for you on this side on the ocean and yet so still and happy in memory and consciousness of you. It was the living away from you that made, at first, the prospect of leaving Wellesly as heartachy... I t was never very possible to leave Wellesley (go good), because so many love-anchors held me there, and it seemed least of all possible when I had just found the long-desired way to your dearest heart... Of course I want to come to you, very much as I want to come to heaven.... Sweetheart, I always love you, more dearly than you know. Please take care of my Katherine. "*

These world were written by one woman to another. This same woman also wrote "America The Beautiful", the poem we are celebrating today.

This woman was Katherine Lee Bates. She and Katharine Coman lived together for 25 years. neither woman was ever married to a man and both discouraged male suitors.

You are here today to celebrate the freedom and liberty so gracefully captured in "America the Beautiful". Festivities planned this month highlight the diverse cultural influences within this country. But would Katharine and her companion be accepted here, in Colorado Springs, in 1993?

Does the fact that Katharine Lee Bates shared her life with a woman affect how you feel about the poem, "America the Beautiful"? Why?

This flyer was handed out during the "America the Beautiful" celebration in July. Below is a press release from Marian Stone dated July 24, 1993.

During the week of festivities observing America the Beautiful in Colorado Springs, Ground Zero members have been distributing the attached flier. Ground Zero does not take a position as to whether Katherine Lee Bates was a lesbian or not. Quite Frankly, we do not view this as significant.

There is significance in the questions asked by this flyer however and that significance goes to the very heart of what we as American as and, indeed, of what America is all about.

Is worth of the individual lost in a flood of stereotyping that vilifies those who do not conform to some group's view of who and what we should be?

Would the poem "America the Beautiful" be any less acceptable, any less beautiful, if it were proven beyond a shadow of a doubt that Ms. Bates was a lesbian or, indeed, is simple suspicion enough?

Would many who celebrate that contribution today, reject it tomorrow with that revelation?

## Would Ms. Bates be welcomed by all in Colorado Springs today?

Should we reject the contributions of untold millions of homosexuals through the ages because of the lies, myths and vilifying stereotyping applied to them today by one segment of society - a segment bent on acquisition of money and power - a segment whose goal is to establish a theocratic form of government (whether in fact or de facto) in the United States?

Ground Zero believes that America's sense of that which is right and just will ultimately prevail and that discrimination that denies equal rights will be rejected. If all of the energy and resources being spent by one group to impose their morality and beliefs on the rest, and if all of the money and energy being spent to resists this, were focused on solving some of the work's and some of the country's real problems, who can say what greater good and progress could be accomplished.

# *Focus on Youth...*

**News release from BOYCOTT COLORADO, August 9, 1993**

(Denver) The "Mile High Hate State" will appropriately host a visit from the most powerful international symbol of homophobia and sexism, Pope John Paul II, on August 12 for World Youth Day. At the same time, President Bill Clinton will fly to Denver to greet the Pope.

Colorado's Amendment 2 legalized discrimination against gays, lesbians and bisexuals last November. Since then, violent crimes against gays and lesbians are up 200%. Gay and lesbians youth attempt/commit suicide 3-5 times more often than their straight counterparts. Not surprisingly, Colorado has one of the highest teen suicide rates in North America.

Boycott Colorado calls on Colorado gays, lesbians and bisexuals and their civil rights supporters to protest the Pope and the homophobic teachings of the Catholic Church. Organizers of World Youth Day (WYD) claim to support "peace", but have chosen Colorado as a location to spread this message. In light of post-amendment 2 statistics, Colorado is not a "peaceful" place for gay and lesbian youth.

According to Cheryl Schwartz, Director of Youth Services for the Gay & Lesbian Community Center of Colorado (GLCCC), "Colorado's teen suicide rate is up 60% from last year. Gay & lesbian youth are feeling more isolated and fearful in Colorado since Amendment 2 passed. The Church's anti-gay teachings endorse self-hatred in Catholic gay & lesbian youth, making them feel 'bad' or 'wrong'. That is very dangerous."

Boycott Colorado's director, Terry Schleder says, "It is hypocritical for WYD to bring these kids, some of them gay & lesbian, to a state that encourages discrimination and violence against them. By choosing to meet the Pope while ignoring Colorado's gay & lesbian community, President Clinton is endorsing homophobia and paying lip-service to our needs."

Contact Terry Schleder 303-399-5445 or Cheryl Schwartz 303-831-6268 for more information.

## EL PASO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH PROVIDES THERAPY GROUP FOR GAY AND LESBIAN YOUTH.

Lesbian and gay young people who take their own lives account for 30% or more of all U.S. suicides according to a recent study issued in the "Report of the Health & Human Services Secretary's Task Force on Youth Suicide."

The report says that killing oneself is the leading cause of death among gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth. The increased risk of suicide facing them is linked to growing up in a society that teaches them to hide and to hate themselves. Gay youths face problems in accepting themselves due to internalization of a negative self image. They often fell totally alone and socially withdrawn out of fear of adverse consequences. As a result of the pressures, lesbian and gay youth are more vulnerable than other youth to psychosocial problems including substance abuse, chronic depression, school failure, early relationship problems, being forced to leave their families and having to survive on their own prematurely. In response to these overwhelming pressures, gay youths will often use a coping mechanism which only tends to make their situation worse: substance use. Approximately 30% of both the lesbian and gay population have problems with alcoholism.

The El Paso County Department of Health addresses these issues at their Drug & Alcohol Family and Adolescent Counseling Center by holding a gay and lesbian therapy group each week. Issues discussed are family relationships, self-esteem, drug and alcohol use, sexuality and HIV infection. Referrals come from school counselors, ministers, and community agencies. Recently, the group has come under attack by the Family Values Groups, proponents of Amendment 2.

{Do these so-called Family Values Groups have a CLUE as to what family values really mean?}

To find out more information, please call, 719-578-3199.

## LIBRARY UPDATE

As announced in the last newsletter, Ground Zero is in the process of establishing a library for researchers and the community. We are asking for donations of books, videos, audio tapes, magazines, articles, etc.

As an adjunct to this library, Ground Zero has made arrangements to establish an informational BBS that will be available to the serious student and researcher both in the office and by modem. Significant work has been done already in setting up the system. Shortly, we will begin to load information into a user friendly format. The next step will be to seek data from other organizations and BBS's across the country. This much needed centralization of information (a must if we are to effectively counter the misinformation flowing from the fundamentalist organization) will hopefully be fully operational in late winter, if not sooner. The BBS will make information available to like organizations across the nation.

We will need volunteers who can do data entry, classify articles and information, and anyone with computer library experience. Since videos will be an important part of the library, we will need to acquire a monitor,a VCR and bookshelves. If you have time, talent and/or materials, please give the office a call. Thanks!

# Aloha!...

## Hawaii Supreme Court Paves Way for Same-Sex Marriage

Taken from The Newsletter of Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, Volume 10, No. 2 Summer, 1993 Written by Evan Wolfson

On May 5th, while most of America had its gay-issue attention span focused on the military hearings in Washington, D.C. on the other side of the country something momentous for lesbian and gay civil rights occurred: a landmark decision by the Hawaii Supreme Court which has possibly opened the door to same sex marriage.

In Baehr v. Lewin, one of our movement's most significant legal victories to date, a court for the first time took a giant step toward allowing lesbians and gay men to marry. The Hawaii Supreme Court ruled that the refusal to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples appeared to violate the state constitutional right to equal protection, and ordered a trail in which the state would have to come up with "compelling" reasons, for continuing to discriminate against gay couples wanting to marry, not just an unsubstantiated repetition of anti-gay arguments.

Under the "strict scrutiny" standard set out by the Court,-and with its recognition that "constitutional law may mandate, like it or not, that customs change with an evolving social order," it appears likely that the state will not be able to defend its denial of marriage licenses based on sex. In Hawaii, then , lesbians and gay men seeking their equal right to marry may have crossed the threshold.

Should lesbians and gay men actually obtain the right to marry in Hawaii, it will have a significant impact across the nation. Although presently no state allows lesbian and gay marriages, all states generally recognize legal marriages performed in other states.

Baehr v. Lewin was brought by Honolulu attorney Dan Foley of Partington & Foley on behalf of two lesbian couples and a gay male couple. They challenged the state's imposition of an "opposite-sex restriction" on their right to choose whom to marry. Because this was the first same-sex marriage case to reach a state supreme court in twenty years, the stakes were very high. Lambda has been deeply involved, at first behind the scenes providing assistance and counsel at several junctures, then with the filing of an amicus (or "friend of the court") brief that appears to have significantly influenced the Court, and now as co-counsel.

The Court's plurality ruling - two of the five high court judges signed on to the decision and a third concurred for different reasons - was as interesting as it was astonishing. Hawaii, like the U.S. and all the other states, has a constitutional provision requiring that the government treat people equally, without prejudice. Hawaii's specifically provides:

"No person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law, nor be denied the equal protection of the laws..or be discriminated in the exercise thereof because of race, religion, sex or ancestry".

The enumeration of "sex" as an explicitly protected category did for Hawaii what the proposed Equal Rights Amendment (E.R.A.) would have done for the U.S. Constitution: it provided the strongest possible legal argument against gender discrimination in all forms. and in Baehr v Lewin, the Court ran with it.

Noting that "parties to the same-sex marriage could theoretically be either homosexuals or heterosexuals," the Court said that the sexual orientation of the plaintiffs was irrelevant. Perhaps as an act of political savvy, the Court declined to treat the case as a matter of gay rights, equal protection for gay people or the right of gay people to marry. Instead, the Court held "it is the state's regulation of access to the status of married persons, on the basis of the applicants' sex, that gives rise to the question whether (they) have been denied the equal protection of the laws."

As Dan Foley and Lambda urged in our briefs, the Court relied heavily on the 1967 case of Loving v. Virginia. In Loving, a Black woman and a white man were criminally convicted of violating Virginia's miscegenation law, which imposed a "same-race restriction" on marriage. Declaring their marriage void, the trial judge stated,

*"Almighty God created the races white, black, yellow, Malay, and red and he place them on separate continents. The fact that he separated the races shows that he did not intend for the races to mix."* (Sounds like a relative of Jesse Helms)

The U.S. Supreme Court rejected this parochial moralizing posing as "reasoning," much as the Hawaii Court rejected the "tautological and circular nature" of the state's argument that same-sex couples cannot marry because marriage is inherently for opposite-sex couples.

Like the Loving Court, the Baehr Court required the State to come up with real, indeed "compelling" reasons, backed by evidence, for discriminating. Unlike the courts hearing same-sex marriage cases twenty years ago, the Hawaii Supreme Court refused to be satisfied with "tortured and conclusory sophistry." Now the State will have to prove that denying same-sex couples a marriage license is necessary to achieve asserted legitimate ends such as "perpetuating the basic family unit," "providing a nurturing environment for children," or making a "moral statement."

The decision, then although imperfect is remarkable. Inclusion at the level of marriage is uniquely revolutionary and subversive in a way that few, if any, other gay rights victories would be. This is true not only because of marriage's central symbolic importance in our society and culture, but also because of what the Court called "encyclopedic multiplicity of rights and benefits that are contingent upon that status."

***continued on next page***

GROUND ZERO
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August 24, 1993

Dear Ground Zero Member;

You've heard the expression "Get out of the kitchen if you can't take the heat'. The heat in this case is CHANGE IN THE 90's and its challenge is accepted at Ground Zero as we continually adjust our campaign for civic equality through education.

The sign of a good civic organization is one which can evaluate itself periodically while maintaining a firm community outreach. On July 5th, the Ground Zero Steering Council agreed to form a task force to explore the benefits of organizational re-structure. The rationale for such soul searching was simple.

(1) Our committee goals grew faster than our ability to staff
(2) Increased accountability and efficiency became vital
(3) A parallel structure to facilitate links to other organizations was needed
(4) Adherence to suggestions by outside experts (our lawyers, accountants and the National Task Force in Washington D.C.) was encouraged

In the final task force presentation on July 26th, the Steering Council reached an agreement to replace itself with a Board of Directors, Elected Officers and an Executive Committee of the Board. All positions are for a term of one year, and any person may be re-elected.

**This structure does not change our 'grassroots' objective set forth in our Mission Statement. It does ensure our future ability for 'grassroots' planning and execution.**

The **Board of Directors** will meet monthly to make policy, uphold policy statements and create long term planning strategies.
It will be comprised of the delegates selected by the permanent committees listed below, a non-voting delegate from Simple Justice(*) and non-voting representatives of associate organizations.

The **Elected Officers** (President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary) are elected by the membership at large.
The unique responsibilities of the President are defined in the following statement:

*"The President maintains the focus of the Board of Directors in its primary obligation of carrying out the Ground Zero Mission Statement, and carries out the Board's directives in the long term planning of the organization. The President does not make autonomous decisions but does act as chairperson of the Board at all Board meetings. The President should also be a primary spokesperson for the organization." - Board of Directors, August 16, 1993*

(*) Simple Justice is an new Colorado Springs organization highlighting political issues in our community

The **Executive Committee of the Board** is made up of five members each representing one of the following areas: INFORMATION SERVICES; COMMUNITY OUTREACH; ADMINISTRATION; INCOME and NETWORKING. Each member will oversee their designated committee/task force activities, develop project strategies and create the agenda for the Board of Directors. The five member group will convene over three consecutive weekly meetings and on the fourth week will report their activities at the monthly Board meeting.

Each of the five Executive Committee members will oversee one of the following areas:

(1) INFORMATION SERVICES
- Advocacy Committee (Speakers Bureau, Press Releases/Relations)
- Education Committee
- Media Production Committee
- Research Committee

(2) COMMUNITY OUTREACH
- Minority Coalition Committee
- Hispanic Caucus Committee
- Community Activities Committee
- Other Caucuses and Associate Groups

(3) ADMINISTRATION
- Legal Task Force
- Finance (Treasurer)
- Office Affairs and Internal Communications (Office Mgr.)
- Offical Documents (Secretary)

(4) INCOME
- Fund Raising Committee
- Grant Writing Committee
- Membership Subscription Task Force

(5) NETWORKING
- Publications/Newsletter Committee
- Phone Tree Task Force
- Membership Relations (Delegates at Large)
- Computer BBS Task Force

FIVE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE POSITIONS ARE NOW AVAILABLE

The Executive Committee positions will be filled from the general membership including current Committee Delegates, Elected Officers (with the exception of the President) or Delegates At Large. In the interest of member involvement, the ideal situation would be where no one held multiple positions. In addition, a representative from the Ground Zero office will support each meeting and will have voting privileges only in case of a tie.

If you are interested in being considered for an Executive Committee position, please phone the Ground Zero office with your intention. Sept. 24th is the last day calls will be taken for these Executive Committee positions. Members wishing to be considered must present their comments at the Board of Directors meeting to be held on Monday, September 27th at 7p.m., room 212, Worner Center, Colorado College.

On October 4th, the Board of Directors will be pleased to announce a complete list of names for all positions within the new Ground Zero organization to include its Board of Directors, Elected Officers, Executive Committee of the Board and each Committee Delegate/Alternate member.

In this new structure there are no ivory towers where titles seem longer than performance. Anyone may talk to anyone and champion CHANGE. Come and give us a try.

Best Regards,

Peter Joseph
Project Coordinator, Organization Re-Structure Task Force

NAACP, Colorado Springs Chicano Unity Council

**A CONSTRUCTIVE PLAN FOR YOUTH**

August 28, 1993

**Objective: To support youth in meeting the challenges they face, to integrate them into our communities, and to assist them in becoming productive members of society.**

I. Governor's "Iron Fist Approach" is equal to a "War on Youth"

* It will turn troubled youths into hardened criminals rather than into productive citizens

* It will criminalize more behavior and create more crime for an already costly, overburdened, and unjust criminal justice system

* It will intensify already poor relations between the criminal justice system and poor communities, especially ethnic minority communities

II. Alternative Activities

**A. Enhance Understanding of the Problem**

1. Spend more time in the neighborhoods meeting with citizens

2. Establish a broad basis of communication with youth throughout the state

3. Focus local industry, education, community, and government leaders on the problems of youth

**B. Invest in Positive Youth Programs**

1. Develop Incentive Programs that Teach Skills to Troubled Youth

2. Expand Employment Opportunities for Disadvantaged Youth

3. Establish a Judicial System/Community Partnership Program that oversees community service for first-time offenders

4. Establish Mentorship Programs for troubled youth that include mandatory seminars with community leaders

5. Implement Community/Corrections Programs for Model Prisoners to Work with Troubled Youth

6. Establish Community Service Programs

**C. Provide Support Programs for Parents**

1. Promote Parent Involvement Programs in Schools

2. Invigorate Neighborhood Community Centers that can provide an array of support services to parents with troubled youths

**D. Invest in Economically Depressed Communities**

1. Implement Economic Development Programs in Minority Communities

2. Expand Employment Opportunities for Ethnic Minority Populations

**E. Improve Education throughout the State**

1. Increase Funding for School Districts

2. Promote Multicultural Curricula Throughout All Education Systems

3. Establish connections between Schools and Community Youth Action Programs

4. Rid the Schools of Racist and Bigoted Teachers

**F. Protect the Rights of All Citizens**

1. Curb Civil Rights Violations by Police and Other Agencies

2. Promote Local Human Rights Ordinances

**G. Establish a Long Term Vision for Improving the Social Conditions Destroying the Lives of Disadvantaged Youth**

1. Provide a set of goals relative to the future of our youth

2. Tell us where we can expect to be with the problem of youth violence twenty years from now assuming the implementation of different legislative measures

3. Tell us how repression and imprisonment will integrate troubled youth into our society and help them become productive citizens

SATURDAY,
SEPTEMBER 11th

BENEFIT CONCERT
FOR C.U.R.E

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Join us for
an evening of
stories, music
and unity,
with:

CINDY BEE
JOSIE MARES
LORI VASQUEZ
and HOME REMEDY

Concert to start at 8:00
Tickets are $3
and can be purchased
at the door or
at the Ground Zero
or C.U.R.E. offices.

All proceeds to benefit the
Colorado Unity Rally for Equality

# subtle EDGE

IN CONCERT

Saturday

September 18th

Join us for a great band
and a great night!

Concert to start at
9:30 p.m.

Drink Specials
All night!!

Tickets are
$4 for one concert
or $7 for two concerts.
(Band for the 17th
at the Penthouse
to be announced.)
($7 will get you in
True Colors
and the Penthouse
all weekend long.)

To benefit the

COLORADO
UNITY
RALLY
FOR EQUALITY

GROUND ZERO

VOICE 1-719-635-6086
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# S A L E  S A L E  S A L E

## G R O U N D  Z E R O  S T O C K E D  U P

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# Q&A: Amendment 2

May1993

## *What is Amendment 2?*

**On November 3, 1992, 53.4 percent of Colorado's voters passed an initiative sponsored by Colorado for Family Values that appeared on the ballot as "Amendment 2." The initiative amends the Constitution of the State of Colorado by adding a new section, section 30(b), to Article II in the Colorado Bill of Rights.**

## *What is the wording of Amendment 2?*

**NO PROTECTED STATUS BASED ON HOMOSEXUAL, LESBIAN OR BISEXUAL ORIENTATION.**

**Neither the State of Colorado, through any of its branches or departments, nor any of its agencies, political subdivisions, municipalities or school districts, shall enact, adopt or enforce any statute, regulation, ordinance or policy whereby homosexual, lesbian or bisexual orientation, conduct, practices or relationships shall constitute or otherwise be the basis of, or entitle any person or class of persons to have or claim any minority status, quota preferences, protected status or claim of discrimination. This Section of the Constitution shall be in all respects self-executing.**

## *What does Amendment 2 do?*

Amendment 2 makes it legal and constitutional to discriminate against men and women who are—or who are thought to be—homosexual or bisexual.

## *How does Amendment 2 make it legal and constitutional to discriminate against gay men, lesbians and bisexuals?*

It repeals existing ordinances and policies in Colorado that protect gay men, lesbians and bisexuals from discrimination in housing, employment and public accommodations on the basis of their sexual orientation. It prohibits the passage of similar state or local government anti-discrimination laws in the future. And it prevents all governmental bodies from considering anyone's claim that sexual orientation discrimination has occurred or is illegal.

## *What is sexual orientation?*

Sexual orientation is a person's sexuality, which is a fundamental and basic part of every human being. Sexual orientation is commonly viewed as having two aspects: physical preference and affectional preference. Physical preference is a person's inclination toward female or male sexual partners. Affectional preference is a person's inclination toward female or male emotional partners.

## *What counties voted against Amendment 2?*

Boulder, Clear Creek, Costilla, Denver, Eagle, Garfield, Gilpin, Gunnison, Hinsdale, La Plata, Pitkin, Routt, San Juan, San Miguel and Summit.

**Amendment 2 makes it *legal* and *constitutional* to discriminate against men and women who are—*or who are thought to be*—homosexual or bisexual.**

## *What's happened to Amendment 2 so far?*

A challenge to the amendment was filed in State District Court in Denver on November 12. The lawsuit claims that Amendment 2 violates the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution and Article II of the Colorado Constitution, which is the State's bill of rights. The trial on the challenge will begin in mid-October. The amendment was scheduled to take effect on January 15, 1993. However, a motion for a preliminary injunction was filed to keep the amendment from being enforced until the court decides on its legality. After three-and-a-half days of testimony, Denver District Court Judge Jeffrey Bayless granted the injunction on January 15. The State appealed Judge Bayless's order to the Colorado Supreme Court on January 19, 1993. The Court set May 24, 1993, as the date for oral argument in the appeal.

## *Why did Judge Bayless grant the injunction?*

In his decision, Judge Bayless said there was a reasonable probability that the plaintiffs will be able to prove at the trial that Amendment 2 is unconstitutional beyond a reasonable doubt.

## *Why does Judge Bayless think the plaintiffs may be able to prove Amendment 2 is unconstitutional?*

The Equal Protection clause of the U.S. Constitution's Fourteenth Amendment guarantees that people will be treated similarly—unless there is a sufficient reason to treat them otherwise. Judge Bayless ruled

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"Special rights" is a made-up phrase. It does not appear in the amendment and has no specific legal meaning. It is a scare-tactic campaign slogan that was used very successfully by Colorado for Family Values.

that Amendment 2 singles out gays, lesbians and bisexuals and interferes with their fundamental right to participate in the political system. He ruled that while the State may not be able to control private prejudices, it also could not encourage them—which is what Amendment 2 does. The judge held that the State would have to show it had a compelling interest in promoting discrimination to justify that sort of unequal treatment. This is the principle of "strict scrutiny." Since even the State admitted it could not make that showing, the judge ruled that there was a reasonable probability that the plaintiffs would defeat Amendment 2 at the trial. Therefore, the law should not go into effect beforehand.

### *What is a fundamental right?*

The U.S. Supreme Court determines fundamental rights through the decisions it makes on the cases it hears. For example, the Court has labeled the rights of citizens to seek help through the court or legislative systems as fundamental rights. In America, fundamental rights take precedence.

### *How could Amendment 2 be unconstitutional if a majority of Coloradans voted for it?*

Because America is a **constitutional democracy**. Our form of government protects the fundamental individual rights guaranteed to every citizen under the U.S. Constitution. It protects citizens from the "tyranny of the majority" and the abuses of an occasionally overzealous government. If a majority of Colorado voters approved a ballot initiative to establish slavery in our state, or decided to take the vote away from women, for example, those initiatives would be declared unconstitutional because they violate fundamental rights guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution. It would not matter how many people voted for them.

### *How could Amendment 2 get on the ballot in the first place if it's unconstitutional?*

Colorado voters have the right to initiate or change legislation. Therefore, the laws in our state make it relatively easy to put an issue on the ballot. For the most part, initiative sponsors just have to get enough voters to sign their petitions.

### *Could we have stopped the amendment from going on the ballot in the first place?*

Probably not. Historically, the Colorado Supreme Court tends to avoid pre-election challenges to proposed ballot initiatives. In Colorado, the Court generally reviews the legality of legislation after the legislation has been adopted. The court practices this "judicial restraint" because of the constitutional principles of the separation of powers.

### *What constitutional rights are violated by Amendment 2?*

Among others, Amendment 2 violates the right of **equal protection** under the law as guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and the **Due Process Clause** of the Colorado Constitution, **freedom of association** and **freedom of expression** as guaranteed under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and Article II of the Colorado Constitution and the **establishment clause** and the **petition clause** of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

### *How does Amendment 2 deprive gay men, lesbians and bisexuals of their Fourteenth Amendment right to equal protection?*

Amendment 2 forbids Colorado courts to enforce any local, state or federal laws, statutes or provisions that recognize or protect gay men, lesbians or bisexuals, which is a denial of equal protection. The amendment establishes and encourages a public and private right to discriminate against a specific group of people. It violates the fundamental right of a particular group of Americans to participate in the political process and to seek legislative change, executive action or judicial rulings to improve their position. Only gay men, lesbians and bisexuals are treated in this way. No other group suffers from this special burden.

### *How does Amendment 2 deny gay men, lesbians and bisexuals their First Amendment and State Constitution rights of freedom of association and expression?*

The amendment discourages people from being politically active and discussing their views about sexual orientation, advocating for equal rights for homosexuals and bisexuals or associating with homosexuals and bisexuals. It forces people to accept a single, state-approved belief about sexual orientation and chills free speech about homosexual and bisexual orientation. The amendment also permits discrimination against people who are even perceived to be homosexual or bisexual.

### *How does Amendment 2 violate the establishment clause of the First Amendment?*

One of the provisions of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution protects freedom of religion. Called the "establishment clause," it prohibits the government from establishing or promoting any particular religion over another. Amendment 2, however, represents a specific religious view about homosexuality and bisexuality,

CONTINUED



advances that particular religious belief and creates legislation with no secular purpose.

### *How does Amendment 2 violate the right to petition as guaranteed under the First Amendment?*

Gay men, lesbians and bisexuals are denied their fundamental right to petition their government for a redress of grievances. Under Amendment 2, people who believe they have been discriminated against because of homosexual or bisexual orientation—actual or perceived—are not allowed to seek help from the courts or any form of government in Colorado. This is a violation of First Amendment rights.

### *What are "special rights"?*

"Special rights" is a made-up phrase. It does not appear in the amendment and has no specific legal meaning. It is a scare-tactic campaign slogan that was used very successfully by Colorado for Family Values. "Special rights" is an emotionally loaded catch-all phrase that Colorado for Family Values uses to group together "minority status," "quota preferences," "protected status" and "claims of discrimination."

### *Do gay men, lesbians and bisexuals want "special rights"?*

No. There's no such thing as "special rights." Homosexuals and bisexuals simply want to be treated the same as all other American citizens and have the same access to the political process.

### *Don't gay men, lesbians and bisexuals already have the same rights as everyone else?*

No. If they did, there would be no need for anti-discrimination legislation. In fact, under Amendment 2, homosexual and bisexual men and women are specifically denied their fundamental rights to appeal to the court system or seek assistance from the government if they think they were discriminated against solely because of their homosexual or bisexual orientation. Amendment 2 allows people to make claims of discrimination based on heterosexual orientation, but denies that same right to homosexuals and bisexuals.

### *What is protected status?*

If a group of people can prove that it has been subjected to and harmed by historical discrimination, the court or government can grant the group "protected status." Once a group is granted protected status, it becomes illegal to discriminate against that group in the future. The civil rights laws of 1964 protect citizens from discrimination because of gender, religion, national origin or race. Recently, disability and age were added to the protected list. Hearing impaired children, for example, can no longer be denied public school education because of their disability.

### *Doesn't protected status automatically lead to affirmative action and quotas?*

Absolutely not. Again, this is a scare tactic used by the supporters of Amendment 2. Protected status just means it's illegal to discriminate against people in that group because of their status. For example, religion is a protected status. There are no affirmative action or quota programs based on religion.

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815 E. 22nd Ave., Denver CO 80205. (303) 861-2258. Fax: (303) 861-2269

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**Speakers Project to End Discrimination**
1764 Gilpin St., Denver CO 80218. (303) 333-8588 or (303) 831-8351. Fax: (303) 322-7641

___Here's my check to help train speakers around the state to combat discrimination and homophobia:
___$25 ___50 ___100 ___$_____ (SPED has applied for 501(c)(3) status. Consult your tax advisor)
___Let me know about volunteering



However, it is illegal to deny someone a job because of that person's religion.

### *What is affirmative action anyway?*

Affirmative action is a temporary remedy used ONLY to correct a historical pattern of gender or racial discrimination.

### *What is minority status?*

There is no legal meaning to "minority status." It was used by the sponsors of Amendment 2 to pit people against one another.

### *What are quota preferences?*

Under very specific and strict legal circumstances, the court may decide to impose special mandates to help government agencies correct serious discrimination suffered by particular groups in the past. Gay men, lesbians and bisexuals have never sought such a remedy in Colorado.

### *What's discrimination?*

The legal definition of discrimination is extremely precise. Under the law, discrimination is unjust and unequal treatment based solely on a person's membership in a particular class or group.

### *What's a claim of discrimination?*

A legal action in which a person charges he or she was treated unjustly and unequally because of his or her membership in a particular group.

### *Are gay men, lesbians and bisexuals discriminated against because of their sexual orientation?*

Yes. Gay men, lesbians and bisexuals—and men and women who are perceived to be homosexual or bisexual—often face discrimination in hiring and promotions, on-the-job harassment, housing and access to medical and other services. They are often victims of intimidation and assault. These are some of the reasons many homosexuals and bisexuals hide their sexual orientation and remain "in the closet."

### *Are religious organizations exempt from anti-discrimination laws?*

Yes. A religious organization cannot be forced to hire or accept anyone who violates its religious beliefs. This exemption is guaranteed under the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights.

### *Do I have to hire or rent to a homosexual or bisexual?*

No, unless you're in a Colorado community with an anti-discrimination law that includes sexual orientation as a category. Even then, there are exceptions. For example, if you employ 20 or less people or if the rental space is in your own home or duplex, you may be exempt.

### *Why is the ACLU involved?*

The American Civil Liberties Union is dedicated to the protection and extension of civil liberties guaranteed to all Americans under the Constitution. The ACLU opposes Amendment 2 because it strips a specific group of Americans of their fundamental rights simply because of their sexual orientation.

### *How is the ACLU involved?*

The ACLU of Colorado and the national ACLU Lesbian and Gay Rights Project are on the legal team challenging Amendment 2. The ACLU is also deeply involved with the public education effort against Amendment 2.

### *Why is Equality Colorado involved?*

Equality Colorado is dedicated to encouraging tolerance, diversity, community inclusiveness and equal rights for all Coloradans regardless of sexual orientation, to the elimination of prejudice and discrimination and to the defense of human and civil rights.

Under the law, discrimination is unjust and unequal treatment based solely on a person's membership in a particular class or group.

### *How is Equality Colorado involved?*

Equality Colorado supports, promotes and operates grass-roots outreach, education and research efforts and builds coalitions with other groups under attack.

### *Why is Speakers Project to End Discrimination involved?*

Speakers Project understands that "Amendment 2 is only a symptom of discrimination, which is a threat to the ideals upon which America was founded. SPED is devoted to eliminating prejudice and bias, particularly homophobia, through education.

### *How is Speakers Project to End Discrimination involved?*

SPED trains people throughout the state to speak about discrimination and homophobia.

### *What is Colorado for Family Values?*

Colorado for Family Values put Amendment 2 on the ballot. Based in Colorado Springs, Colorado for Family Values is part of a national network of far-right religious and political organizations. These organizations include the Christian Coalition and the National Legal Foundation, both affiliated with Pat Robertson, and Lou Sheldon's Traditional Values Coalition, which is based in Southern California. Other affiliated right-wing groups include Focus on the Family, Concerned Women for America, Summit Ministries and the Eagle Forum.

You can also contact Colorado for Family Values directly at:
228 N. Cascade Ave. #102
Colorado Springs CO 80903
(719) 577-4916 or (719) 548-0458
Fax: (719) 471-1358
Ask about their newsletter too.

CONTINUED ON PAGE

### *What else is being done to un-do 2?*

We send trained speakers to schools and organizations, put on conferences, hold special events, develop and distribute factsheets and other materials, keep the media informed, give interviews, answer requests for information, conduct opposition research and work cooperatively with many other organizations and citizens. The national ACLU Lesbian and Gay Rights Project has commissioned a briefing book based on the experience in Colorado to help other states fight discrimination.

### *How do the organizations pay for all this?*

Out of our general funds. None of us ask for or receive any government money. Each organization is a separate private non-profit. The ACLU depends on membership dues, contributions and gifts and the proceeds of benefits and special events. Equality Colorado and Speakers Project are totally supported by contributions and grants.

### *Do the ACLU of Colorado, Equality Colorado and Speakers Project need money?*

Are you kidding? Of course. And so do all the other organizations that are working to abolish discrimination.

### *How else can people help in addition to sending money?*

Train to be a speaker, volunteer at the office, help raise money, assist with educational events, write letters, speak up.

### *What states currently include sexual orientation protection in their civil rights laws?*

California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, Vermont, Wisconsin and the District of Columbia.

### *What states have been targeted by the religious and political right for the next round of anti-gay legislation?*

Currently, the far-right is working to pass anti-gay laws similar to Amendment 2 in 12 states: California, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Oregon and Washington.

### *What's the position of the ACLU of Colorado, Equality Colorado and Speakers Project on the boycott?*

We are neutral. We've decided to focus on litigation and education in our challenge to the amendment. However, the national office of the ACLU and some of the other ACLU affiliates have voted to support the boycott. For more information about the boycott, contact Boycott Colorado, Inc., at (303) 777-0560. Out of Colorado, call 1-(800) 4-BOYCOTT.

### *How can I get more information about the far-right in Colorado?*

Citizens Project monitors the far-right in El Paso County. Reach them at:
P.O. Box 2085
Colorado Springs CO 80901-2085
New phone: (719) 520-9899
New fax: (719) 520-0118
Ask about their newsletter.

**GROUND ZERO/COLORADO SPRINGS ALSO ACTIVELY TRACKS, EDUCATES ON AND RESPONDS TO THE RELIGIOUS RIGHT AND ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO THE GLBT COMMUNITY. A 501(C)(3) EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION (PENDING) THEY SUPPLY SPEAKERS, INFORMATION, ACCESS TO RESOURCE MATERIAL, AND MAINTAIN FACILITIES FOR SERIOUS RESEARCHERS AND SOME LENDING LIBRARY MATERIALS. MANY INFORMATIONAL VIDEO TAPES ARE ALSO AVAILABLE TO CHECK OUT OR, IN SOME INSTANCES, TO PURCHASE. GROUND ZERO STRIVES ALSO TO SUPPORT AND WORK IN COALITION WITH OTHER CHALLENGED AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES AND IS INVOLVED WITH A COALITION OF 26 MINORITY AND CIVIL RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS IN COLORADO SPRINGS. GROUND ZERO'S OFFICE IS OPEN REGULAR BUSINESS HOURS.**
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**ASK ABOUT MEMBERSHIP AND NEWSLETTER**

### *How can I get more information about the lawsuit?*

The ACLU of Colorado has a packet of information that includes the complaint, news clips, media releases, trial court briefs and the decisions. It's yours for $10 to cover copying and postage. For $20, we'll send you the packet plus copies of the briefs in the Colorado Supreme Court. ■

**Q&A: Amendment 2**
is published by the American Civil Liberties Union of Colorado with the help of Equality Colorado, Speakers Project to End Discrimination and a grant from the American Booksellers Association. This is an updated version of ***ACLU Q&A: Amendment 2***, which was published by the ACLU of Colorado in March 1993.

***Publisher***
Education Committee
ACLU of Colorado Foundation

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and the women in "A Quiet Little Wedding" at the Denver Center Theater Company

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OF COLORADO

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# ...from around the Nation

*Aloha continued...*

The reasoning of the decision itself shows that transformative potential of fighting for our equal right to marry. The Court grasped what many even in our own community have not: the fundamental issues in these cases are choice and equality, not the pros and cons of a way of life, or even the "right" choice.

Lambda argued what many lesbians and gay men feel: Marriages between two men or two women can fulfill the same interests as marriages between a man and a woman - a public affirmation of emotional and financial commitment and interdependence, a means of gaining access to legal and economic benefits and protections, a structure in which to raise children together, support for relationships important to society, and celebration of individuals' religious beliefs. But equally important, the government should not be telling people what the can and connote do based on their sex, or on their sexual orientation, an aspect of sexuality. The Court's opinion sidestepped the thicket of sexual orientation politics to cut to the core of most anti-gay discrimination: gender bias...that is , not just heterosexism, but sexism.

Now that the denial of same-sex marriage has been held presumptively unconstitutional in Hawaii, it is up to the State to decide whether and how it will defend its discrimination. If it chooses to fight, we'll fight back.

In the meantime, there will be political fall-out as well: in reactionary right-wing will not ignore this decision. We all need to defend this victory - through support for the community in Hawaii which will almost certainly face a legislative battle and support for Dan Foley and the courageous plaintiffs.

But while fighting, we should take a moment to savor this win. The ground underlying our second-class status has shifted, and one of the major barriers to our full, equal citizenship has cracked open. If choice and inclusion are essential parts of lesbians' and gay men's pursuit of happiness, then with this initial victory out of Hawaii or legal rights have expanded.

**********

Updates from the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force ACTIVIST ALERT July Publication.

NGLTF and GLBVA (Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Veterans of America) kicked off the National Mobilization against the Bank with a July 4th action in Washington, D.C. Lesbian, gay and bisexual veterans held a morning rally, and then led a contingent of activists participating in the official Independence Day parade. The marchers then gathered in front of the White House, as some veterans returned their military medals, symbolizing their opposition to the ban.

The 30th Anniversary of the 1963 Civil Rights March on Washington, which featured Dr. Martin Luther Kin Jr.'s historic "I Have a Dream" speech, will be marked by another March on Washington, to take place on August 28, 1993. The New coalition of Conscience will convene a massive march and rally at the Lincoln Memorial to renew the call for justice and peace. NGLTF is one of the co-conveners for the March, and is coordinating a contingent of gay and lesbian marchers to join this unprecedented coalition.

*****

NGLTF will host a Fight the Right Midwest Regional Summit September 4th and 5th in Cincinnati. National and regional activists will gather for two days of dialog and skills - building to counter Right Wing organizing in Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin. Summit sessions will include media skills, coalition building, grassroots organizing, boycotts, bigot busters, and direct action.

Scheduled workshop presenters include NGLTF's Robert Bray and Scot Nakagawa: Lambda Legal Defense attorney Suzanne Goldberg: Suzanne Pharr of the Arkansas Women's Project; and key Midwest regional activists.

Call Peri Jude Radecic, NGLTF Deputy Director of Public Policy, for details at 202-332-6483.

*****

The District of Columbia's sodomy reform bill is still on Capital Hill, undergoing its Congressional review period. Because D.C. is not a state, has only limited home rule, legislation enacted by the D.C. City Council is subject to a 60 day review period during which congress can block its implementation. As D.C. does not have any Senators or a full-voting Representative, constituents from outside the District actually have more clout than D.C. residents.

Write and call: U.S.Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510. 202-224-3121; U.S.House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515, 202-225-3121.

Nevada activists have successfully guided sodomy repeal through their state legislature. An intense lobbying effort led to passage in both houses by more than two to one rations. The bill was then signed into law by the governor, marking the first legislative repeal of a sodomy law since the U.S. Supreme Court decided Bower v. Hardwick in 1986. Twenty-two states and the District of Columbia still have laws banning certain sexual acts between consenting adults.

Contact Nevadans for Constitutional Equality at 3187 S. Eastern Ave., Suite 5, Las Vegas, NV 89109; 702-735-6943 to congratulate them and share ideas. Call Martin Hiraga, NGLTF Privacy Project Director, at 202-332-6483, ext. 3307 to strategies sodomy repeal.

**Why did Colorado for Family Values put Amendment 2 on the ballot?**
They say they were responding to efforts to pass an anti-discrimination ordinance in Colorado Springs. Because of their religious views, the members of CFV consider homosexuality an "abomination." They believe heterosexuality is the only "correct" sexual orientation. They believe "sexual orientation is not an appropriate criterion for civil rights."

**Does the amendment also deny fundamental rights to gay men, lesbians and bisexuals even if they are celibate or maintain opposite sex relationships?**
Yes.

**Who are the plaintiffs in the lawsuit?**
Nine Colorado citizens, the cities of Boulder, Aspen and Denver and the Boulder Valley School District. The citizens are gay men, lesbians, and a heterosexual man living with AIDS. They include tennis player Martina Navratilova, a police officer, an ordained minister and city and state employees.

**Why are Boulder, Denver and Aspen plaintiffs in the lawsuit?**
Under home rule, the elected officials of these cities passed ordinances that eliminate discrimination in housing, employment and public accommodations because of sexual orientation, age, marital status, gender, family responsibility, disability and other criteria. Amendment 2 repeals homosexual and bisexual status from those ordinances. Boulder, Aspen and Denver claim their home rule rights have been violated.

**What is home rule?**
Home rule is the power given to certain cities by the Colorado State Constitution to control their own government and take care of their own residents. Two-thirds of Coloradans live in home-rule cities.

**How can Amendment 2 be overturned?**
In one of two ways. It could be repealed or superseded in a general election. Or the court may find it to be unconstitutional.

**Why are Governor Romer and Attorney General Gale Norton the defendants in the lawsuit?**
Because they are the official representatives of the State. Regardless of their personal opinions, they are required to be included in the case.

**What's next? Will the lawsuit go to the U.S. Supreme Court?**
We don't know. The Court set May 24, 1993, as the date to begin hearing arguments about the injunction. The trial on the complaint is set to come before Judge Bayless in mid-October. However, whether the trial in the fall takes place depends on the Colorado Supreme Court decision. The side that loses can be expected to appeal. The case could be taken to the U.S. Supreme Court.

**Who are some of the local attorneys in the lawsuit?**
**Jean E. Dubofsky**, the lead attorney for the lawsuit, is a former Colorado Supreme Court Justice and a past member of the ACLU of Colorado Board of Directors. **David H. Miller** is the Legal Director of the ACLU of Colorado and the past chair of the Constitutional Rights Committee of the Colorado Bar Association. **Gregory A. Eurich**, the ACLU cooperating attorney, practices law at Holland & Hart. **Jeannie Winer** is a sole practitioner in Boulder, Colorado, with an emphasis on criminal defense. The attorneys are providing their services *pro bono*, free of charge. The City Attorneys of Boulder, Denver and Aspen are also co-counsels.

**What organizations are on the legal team?**
The Colorado Legal Initiatives Project (CLIP) organized the litigation. CLIP asked the attorneys, the ACLU of Colorado, the National ACLU Lesbian and Gay Rights Project and the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund to represent the plaintiffs.

**What other organizations are involved in the lawsuit?**
*Amicus curiae* (friend of the court) briefs are filed by independent people or organizations that are not parties to the lawsuit. However, they feel they have some stake in the outcome of the lawsuit or have some special expertise to provide to the court. More than 40 highly reputable organizations, from the Colorado Bar Association to the National Education Association, have filed *amicus* briefs on behalf of the plaintiffs.

**How much is the lawsuit going to cost and who's paying for it?**
If the lawsuit goes all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, the case could cost more than $100,000 over the next two years. Each participating organization covers its own costs, including staff salaries and other overhead expenses. In addition, CLIP has pledged to pay for litigation costs, such as bringing in expert witnesses.

A religious organization cannot be forced to hire or accept anyone who violates its religious beliefs. This exemption is guaranteed under the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights.

CONTINUED ON PAGE SIX



**What else is being done to un-do 2?**
We send trained speakers to schools and organizations, put on conferences, hold special events, develop and distribute factsheets and other materials, keep the media informed, give interviews, answer requests for information, conduct opposition research and work cooperatively with many other organizations and citizens. The national ACLU Lesbian and Gay Rights Project has commissioned a briefing book based on the experience in Colorado to help other states fight discrimination.

**How do the organizations pay for all this?**
Out of our general funds. None of us ask for or receive any government money. Each organization is a separate private non-profit. The ACLU depends on membership dues, contributions and gifts and the proceeds of benefits and special events. Equality Colorado and Speakers Project are totally supported by contributions and grants.

**Do the ACLU of Colorado, Equality Colorado and Speakers Project need money?**
Are you kidding? Of course. And so do all the other organizations that are working to abolish discrimination.

**How else can people help in addition to sending money?**
Train to be a speaker, volunteer at the office, help raise money, assist with educational events, write letters, speak up.

**What states currently include sexual orientation protection in their civil rights laws?**
California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, Vermont, Wisconsin and the District of Columbia.

**What states have been targeted by the religious and political right for the next round of anti-gay legislation?**
Currently, the far-right is working to pass anti-gay laws similar to Amendment 2 in 12 states: California, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Oregon and Washington.

**What's the position of the ACLU of Colorado, Equality Colorado and Speakers Project on the boycott?**
We are neutral. We've decided to focus on litigation and education in our challenge to the amendment. However, the national office of the ACLU and some of the other ACLU affiliates have voted to support the boycott. For more information about the boycott, contact Boycott Colorado, Inc., at (303) 777-0560. Out of Colorado, call 1-(800) 4-BOYCOTT.

**How can I get more information about the far-right in Colorado?**
Citizens Project monitors the far-right in El Paso County. Reach them at:
P.O. Box 2085
Colorado Springs CO 80901-2085
New phone: (719) 520-9899
New fax: (719) 520-0118
Ask about their newsletter.

**GROUND ZERO/COLORADO SPRINGS ALSO ACTIVELY TRACKS, EDUCATES ON AND RESPONDS TO THE RELIGIOUS RIGHT AND ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO THE GLBT COMMUNITY. A 501(C)(3) EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION (PENDING) THEY SUPPLY SPEAKERS, INFORMATION, ACCESS TO RESOURCE MATERIAL, AND MAINTAIN FACILITIES FOR SERIOUS RESEARCHERS AND SOME LENDING LIBRARY MATERIALS. MANY INFORMATIONAL VIDEO TAPES ARE ALSO AVAILABLE TO CHECK OUT OR, IN SOME INSTANCES, TO PURCHASE. GROUND ZERO STRIVES ALSO TO SUPPORT AND WORK IN COALITION WITH OTHER CHALLENGED AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES AND IS INVOLVED WITH A COALITION OF 26 MINORITY AND CIVIL RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS IN COLORADO SPRINGS. GROUND ZERO'S OFFICE IS OPEN REGULAR BUSINESS HOURS.**
**MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 1982 COS, CO 80901**
**PHONE: 1-719-635-6086**
**FAX; 1-719-635-6106**
**ASK ABOUT MEMBERSHIP AND NEWSLETTER**

**How can I get more information about the lawsuit?**
The ACLU of Colorado has a packet of information that includes the complaint, news clips, media releases, trial court briefs and the decisions. It's yours for $10 to cover copying and postage. For $20, we'll send you the packet plus copies of the briefs in the Colorado Supreme Court. ■

**Q&A: Amendment 2**
is published by the American Civil Liberties Union of Colorado with the help of Equality Colorado, Speakers Project to End Discrimination and a grant from the American Booksellers Association. This is an updated version of ***ACLU Q&A: Amendment 2***, which was published by the ACLU of Colorado in March 1993.

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and the women in "A Quiet Little Wedding" at the Denver Center Theater Company

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# Q&A: Amendment 2

**May1993**

**What is Amendment 2?**

**On November 3, 1992, 53.4 percent of Colorado's voters passed an initiative sponsored by Colorado for Family Values that appeared on the ballot as "Amendment 2." The initiative amends the Constitution of the State of Colorado by adding a new section, section 30(b), to Article II in the Colorado Bill of Rights.**

**What is the wording of Amendment 2?**

**NO PROTECTED STATUS BASED ON HOMOSEXUAL, LESBIAN OR BISEXUAL ORIENTATION.**

**Neither the State of Colorado, through any of its branches or departments, nor any of its agencies, political subdivisions, municipalities or school districts, shall enact, adopt or enforce any statute, regulation, ordinance or policy whereby homosexual, lesbian or bisexual orientation, conduct, practices or relationships shall constitute or otherwise be the basis of, or entitle any person or class of persons to have or claim any minority status, quota preferences, protected status or claim of discrimination. This Section or the Constitution shall be in all respects self-executing.**

**What does Amendment 2 do?**
Amendment 2 makes it legal and constitutional to discriminate against men and women who are—or who are thought to be—homosexual or bisexual.

**How does Amendment 2 make it legal and constitutional to discriminate against gay men, lesbians and bisexuals?**
It repeals existing ordinances and policies in Colorado that protect gay men, lesbians and bisexuals from discrimination in housing, employment and public accommodations on the basis of their sexual orientation. It prohibits the passage of similar state or local government anti-discrimination laws in the future. And it prevents all governmental bodies from considering anyone's claim that sexual orientation discrimination has occurred or is illegal.

**What is sexual orientation?**
Sexual orientation is a person's sexuality, which is a fundamental and basic part of every human being. Sexual orientation is commonly viewed as having two aspects: physical preference and affectional preference. Physical preference is a person's inclination toward female or male sexual partners. Affectional preference is a person's inclination toward female or male emotional partners.

**What counties voted against Amendment 2?**
Boulder, Clear Creek, Costilla, Denver, Eagle, Garfield, Gilpin, Gunnison, Hinsdale, La Plata, Pitkin, Routt, San Juan, San Miguel and Summit.

Amendment 2 makes it *legal* and *constitutional* to discriminate against men and women who are—*or who are thought to be*—homosexual or bisexual.

**What's happened to Amendment 2 so far?**
A challenge to the amendment was filed in State District Court in Denver on November 12. The lawsuit claims that Amendment 2 violates the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution and Article II of the Colorado Constitution, which is the State's bill of rights. The trial on the challenge will begin in mid-October. The amendment was scheduled to take effect on January 15, 1993. However, a motion for a preliminary injunction was filed to keep the amendment from being enforced until the court decides on its legality. After three-and-a-half days of testimony, Denver District Court Judge Jeffrey Bayless granted the injunction on January 15. The State appealed Judge Bayless's order to the Colorado Supreme Court on January 19, 1993. The court set May 24, 1993, as the date for oral argument in the appeal.

**Why did Judge Bayless grant the injunction?**
In his decision, Judge Bayless said there was a reasonable probability that the plaintiffs will be able to prove at the trial that Amendment 2 is unconstitutional beyond a reasonable doubt.

**Why does Judge Bayless think the plaintiffs may be able to prove Amendment 2 is unconstitutional?**
The Equal Protection clause of the U.S. Constitution's Fourteenth Amendment guarantees that people will be treated similarly—unless there is a sufficient reason to treat them otherwise. Judge Bayless ruled

# ...from around the Nation

*Aloha continued...*

The reasoning of the decision itself shows that transformative potential of fighting for our equal right to marry. The Court grasped what many even in our own community have not: the fundamental issues in these cases are choice and equality, not the pros and cons of a way of life, or even the "right" choice.

Lambda argued what many lesbians and gay men feel: Marriages between two men or two women can fulfill the same interests as marriages between a man and a woman - a public affirmation of emotional and financial commitment and interdependence, a means of gaining access to legal and economic benefits and protections, a structure in which to raise children together, support for relationships important to society, and celebration of individuals' religious beliefs. But equally important, the government should not be telling people what the can and connote do based on their sex, or on their sexual orientation, an aspect of sexuality. The Court's opinion sidestepped the thicket of sexual orientation politics to cut to the core of most anti-gay discrimination: gender bias...that is , not just heterosexism, but sexism.

Now that the denial of same-sex marriage has been held presumptively unconstitutional in Hawaii, it is up to the State to decide whether and how it will defend its discrimination. If it chooses to fight, we'll fight back.

In the meantime, there will be political fall-out as well: in reactionary right-wing will not ignore this decision. We all need to defend this victory - through support for the community in Hawaii which will almost certainly face a legislative battle and support for Dan Foley and the courageous plaintiffs.

But while fighting, we should take a moment to savor this win. The ground underlying our second-class status has shifted, and one of the major barriers to our full, equal citizenship has cracked open. If choice and inclusion are essential parts of lesbians' and gay men's pursuit of happiness, then with this initial victory out of Hawaii or legal rights have expanded.

**********

Updates from the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force ACTIVIST ALERT July Publication.

NGLTF and GLBVA (Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Veterans of America) kicked off the National Mobilization against the Bank with a July 4th action in Washington, D.C. Lesbian, gay. and bisexual veterans held a morning rally, and then led a contingent of activists participating in the official Independence Day parade. The marchers then gathered in front of the White House, as some veterans returned their military medals, symbolizing their opposition to the ban.

The 30th Anniversary of the 1963 Civil Rights March on Washington, which featured Dr. Martin Luther Kin Jr.'s historic "I Have a Dream" speech, will be marked by another March on Washington, to take place on August 28, 1993. The New coalition of Conscience will convene a massive march and rally at the Lincoln Memorial to renew the call for justice and peace. NGLTF is one of the co-conveners for the March, and is coordinating a contingent of gay and lesbian marchers to join this unprecedented coalition.

*****

NGLTF will host a Fight the Right Midwest Regional Summit September 4th and 5th in Cincinnati. National and regional activists will gather for two days of dialog and skills - building to counter Right Wing organizing in Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin. Summit sessions will include media skills, coalition building, grassroots organizing, boycotts, bigot busters, and direct action.

Scheduled workshop presenters include NGLTF's Robert Bray and Scot Nakagawa: Lambda Legal Defense attorney Suzanne Goldberg: Suzanne Pharr of the Arkansas Women's Project; and key Midwest regional activists.

Call Peri Jude Radecic, NGLTF Deputy Director of Public Policy, for details at 202-332-6483.

*****

The District of Columbia's sodomy reform bill is still on Capital Hill, undergoing its Congressional review period. Because D.C. is not a state, has only limited home rule, legislation enacted by the D.C. City Council is subject to a 60 day review period during which congress can block its implementation. As D.C. does not have any Senators or a full-voting Representative, constituents from outside the District actually have more clout than D.C. residents.

Write and call: U.S.Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510. 202-224-3121; U.S.House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515, 202-225-3121.

Nevada activists have successfully guided sodomy repeal through their state legislature. An intense lobbying effort led to passage in both houses by more than two to one rations. The bill was then signed into law by the governor, marking the first legislative repeal of a sodomy law since the U.S. Supreme Court decided Bower v. Hardwick in 1986. Twenty-two states and the District of Columbia still have laws banning certain sexual acts between consenting adults.

Contact Nevadans for Constitutional Equality at 3187 S. Eastern Ave., Suite 5, Las Vegas, NV 89109; 702-735-6943 to congratulate them and share ideas. Call Martin Hiraga, NGLTF Privacy Project Director, at 202-332-6483, ext. 3307 to strategies sodomy repeal.

# *Sound Off ... A member speaks out on teamwork*

We asked Linda F. for an end-of-season softball report, and she sounded off when she compared softball and Ground Zero.....

"I guess I was expected to write this glowing tribute to the softball team, telling you all of the wonderful things that happened, and how great we are. Unfortunately, I can't do that. We didn't have a great season. We finished with a 2 and 12 record, and while winning wasn't the point, we had the chance to be better than we were. The only people standing in our way were ourselves.

I don't know when it started, but the attitudes on the team really got out of control. When half of us were trying really hard, the other half weren't, and when the other half began trying really hard, the rest of us were partially burned out. Things were said, feelings got hurt, people were theatening to quit, and a couple actually did. It was almost as if no one wanted to follow a leader, and the leader didn't know how to lead anyway. This is hard to admit because I was the leader.

I didn't know where the frustrations were coming from. All of us respected each other; we even liked each other. I didn't know what was really wrong, so I didn't know how to fix it.

And then I noticed what was happening in Ground Zero. People were not sure how to lead, and people not wanting to follow anyway. Delegates encouraging others to take initiative, and members getting upset when they did. Peeople left because they didn't like the way things were going, but not being willing to stay and try to change things.

*It kind of worried me. After all, if we can't come together as a softball team to have fun, how do we come together as a community to fight for our basic rights to live? If people are going to leave instead of continuing to work things out, what happens when the people still fighting need help? If the left fielder goes home, who chases the ball when it is hit there? If you leave the center fielder all alone in the outfield, can you blame that person if the ball gets by them?*

So there was a lot to learn from this team. Not just about the game itself, but about people. Unfortunately, I don't understand people very well. I've been told that the most Irish thing about me is my temper, and I think the team would agree with that. I don't think I'm the right leader for this, and the team obviously agreed and replaced me with three weeks to go in the season. It seems kind of fitting that ground Zero was putting together a new structure at the same time.

So there were good things that came from the season. Included in this newsletter is the list of awards for members of the team. All the taem members deserve your praise and congratulations, not because we played so well, but because we were willing to play. We were willing to stand up with the name of your organization on our shirts and play every week, despite all the probelems, bad officiating, comments from other teams, and the IRS telling us we couldn't have a team. From that perspective we won. And to me it was worth all the effort.

**And Ground Zero? I see great things ahead. We have some great leaders who are not afraid to lead. We have a new structure which encourages more participation and shorter meetings. And please remember that we are and must be a team.** Finding new players is always diificult and if there are too many gaps in your defense, the other team won't need your errors to win. Non-participation is enough.

So we lost. But we broke down several stereotypes and generally played well. Even though Ground Zero will probably not be able to sponsor another team due to IRS regulations. our team will go into history as the first openly lesbian softball team to join Colorado Springs Parks and Recreation League.

So the season's over. My hip hurts and my knee is swollen, and I think that I jammed my shoulder. What sounds good is a long hot bath and a massage. Still...

There's a list in the office for non-organized volleyball. Anyone up for a new sport? I PROMISE I WON'T COACH. "

## GZ Softball All-Stars

**MOST IMPROVED PLAYER: Tracy H.**

**MOST VALUABLE ROOKIE: Kelee G.**

**PLAYER THAT LEARNED THE MOST: Sue D.**

**MOST IMPROVED HITTER: Jen E.**

**MOST IMPROVED FIELDER: Darlene H.**

**BEST PITCHER: Robin L.**

**BEST BATTING AVERAGE: Rose T.**

**BEST FIELDER: Julie C.**

**MOST EXPERIENCED PLAYER: Tina Van S.**

**WALKING WOUNDED AWARD: Marian S.**

**MOST VALUABLE PLAYER: Sandra C.**

**MOST HOME RUNS: Sandra C., Tina Van S., and Julie C.**

**LOUDEST CHEERLEADER: Sherry W.**

**MOST VERSATILE: Avis H.**

# *ACLU offers Kudos....*

A letter received from the A.C.L.U. (American Civil Liberties Union of Colorado) on July 22, 1993.

Dear Friends,

Congratulations. You've made history.

Thanks to your support, Amendment 2 is on its way to becoming undone.

On Monday July 19, in a 6 to 1 vote, the Colorado Supreme Court upheld the preliminary injunction Judge Bayless had granted in January. This prevents the amendment from going into effect until a trail on the merits is held. In its decision, the Court ruled that "Amendment 2 must be subject to strict judicial scrutiny in order to determine whether it is constitutionally valid under the Equal Protection Clause."

This means that at the trial, set to begin October 12, the State will have to prove that it has a compelling interest in "fencing out" an identifiable group of people from participating fully in the political process - which is what would happen under Amendment 2. In its decision, the Court pointed out that the State failed to prove a compelling interest in the preliminary injunction hearing before Judge Bayless or in its appeal to the Colorado Supreme Court.

When you think about it, that isn't too surprising. After all, it's tough to prove that discriminating against a particular group of citizens just because they make some people uneasy serves any compelling State interest.

By upholding the injunction, the Colorado Supreme Court has indicated that it believed there is an excellent probability that amendment 2 will be declared unconstitutional at the trial in mid-October.

But what makes this decision even more exiting and important is that this is the FIRST time a court has ever specifically declared that equal participation in the political process is a fundamental right guaranteed under the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S.Constitution.

On Tuesday, July 20, the State announced that it would appeal the decision of the Colorado Supreme Court to the U.S. Supreme Court. This appeal is a desperate attempt by the State to avoid being held to the standard of strict scrutiny. It would rather be held to the much less rigorous standard of "rational basis".

There's no way to know if the U.S.Supreme Court will hear the case. We'll keep you informed.

As you probably know, we've been working on the challenge to Amendment 2 since last July. That's when we realized amendment 2 would be on the November ballot. Although we thought passage was extremely unlikely (we believed the poll, too), we began preparing a challenge - just in case.

Working with a team of attorneys from Colorado Legal Initiatives Project, the national ACLU Lesbian and Gay Rights; Project and the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, we had the challenge in final form by election eve. Denver, Aspen, Boulder and the Boulder Valley School District joined the team when the election results came in . The complaint was filed nine days later on November 12. An amazing feat.

Since then, David Miller, our staff attorney, and Leslie Pagett, our paralegal, have devoted at least 30 percent of their time to the fight against Amendment 2 and Amendment 2-related work. For example, they helped prepare the original complaint, briefs and argument. David has been involved in the legal strategy from the beginning and coordinated the 40 groups that wrote six amicus briefs to the Colorado Supreme Court. Holland & Hart's Greg Eurich, an ACLU cooperating attorney, was the lead counsel at the hearing on the preliminary injunction. ACLU attorneys are responding to the State's lengthy discovery requests in the litigation scheduled for mid-October. This litigation may be postponed until the outcome of the appeal to the U.S.Supreme Court is known.

In addition to the litigation, we mounted an aggressive campaign to educate the public on the real meaning of Amendment 2. Nancy Solomon, our Public information Director, produced a Question and Answer brochure for our membership. To date, the Q & A is the only educational piece of its kind and is distributed extensively by other organizations devoted to the effort to UN-Do 2. We have held speaker's training sessions in Denver, Durango and Grand Junction and will hold another in Colorado Springs on August 4. We actively solicit speaking engagements. Our volunteers, Board members - especially Education Chair Don Bounds - and staff have talked to hundreds of people in schools, civic organizations, national conferences and at a wide variety of public events.

All of this costs money. Your support made it possible. Thank you.

Most sincerely,

James H. Joy.

*On August 8, Ground Zero hosted a Town Meeting featuring Jim Joy and Nancy Solomon. The meeting was very informational..... Jim Joy reviewed the status of Amendment 2 and Nancy presented several pieces of educational materials. The membership also viewed two videos on the Religious Rights and Politics and the Oregon commercial production to Vote No on 9.*

*Enclosed in this newsletter is the Question and Answer education piece mentioned in Jim's letter. I thought you would enjoy reading it and sharing its information.*

# *Rabbis adopt Civil Rights Resolution*

Letter received from the Central Conference of American Rabbis....

Dear Friends:

The Central Conference of American Rabbis is the oldest and largest rabbinical organization in North America. With a membership of 1700 rabbis serving 1.3 million Jews in congregations throughout the continent and hundreds of thousands of others on college campuses in military service and in communal life, the Central Conference of American Rabbis is the most representative rabbinical organization today.

We have just completed our annual convention, which this year took place in Montreal. As one of our priorities, we attempt to bring to major issues facing all people the insights, concern and commitment of our faith community. I am sharing with you the enclosed resolution which speaks to a matter of great importance.

On behalf of my colleagues, I thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely, yours,

Rabbi Sheldon Zimmerman (President)

*Adopted at the 104th Annual Convention, Central Conference of American Rabbis, June 1993, Montreal, Quebec, Canada*

ON CONVENING IN STATES DENYING LEGAL PROTECTION OF CIVIL RIGHTS FOR GAYS AND LESBIANS:

**WHEREAS** the CCAR has long-standing commitment to civil rights of all individuals regardless of sexual orientation, and

**WHEREAS**, numerous ballot initiatives are currently being proposed in other jurisdictions, to similarly prevent the access to protection of civil rights laws, on the basis of sexual orientation, and

**WHEREAS**, the CCAR considers the principle in this instance to take priority over the transaction of business as usual, therefore

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the CCAR not hold regional or national meetings in any state, province, or municipality which has a law in effect on or after January 1, 1995, denying gays and lesbians legal protection of their civil rights. If a regional body cannot comply with this resolution within its own boundaries, it will be exempted.

## *In the Navy...*

Former Navy sailor Larry Meholick has been imprisoned for more than two years after a widely-disputed conviction of forcible sodomy while in the military. Although both witnesses against him have recanted their statements, he is still servicing a six-year sentence, enduring repeated moves, mistreatment, harassment by his guards, and placement in solitary confinement.

Meholick's spirits have been raised by the Free Larry Meholick Campaign and by the thousands of letters which have been sent to him. His jailers have recently prohibited him from receiving or responding to his mail but past external pressure has led to slightly-improved conditions and direct visits from the barracks' commandant.

NGLTF has provided technical support to Meholick's attorneys and has drawn media attention to his situation. We are currently lobbying Amnesty International to classify him as the first gay prisoner of conscience in the U.S.

You can write letter to support Larry Meholick at Box 75800, Drawer A. Fort, KS 66027-7140. Also write Colonel Lowe, Commandant, U.S. Disciplinary Barracks, Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027. Call Amnesty at 212-633-4200 for more information.



## *Welcome new Delegate-at-Large*

Hi, My name is Tina C., manager of True Colors and your new Delegate-at-Large for Ground Zero. I have lived in Colorado Springs for over 15 years and have been a part of "our" community for eight years. As manager of Colorado Springs only women's bar, I feel it is my responsibility to inform women about the status of the fight to overturn Amendment 2, and other issues affecting us. What better way to do that than as a representative of Ground Zero and you. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please feel free to talk to me.

## *Ground Zero wins Chinook Grant*

The Chinook Fund recently awarded grants totaling $4000 to two Colorado Springs groups. The fund gave $2500 to Ground Zero, and $1500 to the Pikes Peak Justice and Peace Commision, a nonviolence advocacy group. The Chinook Fund is a publicly supported foundation that assists organizations in low-income or oppressed communities that may have difficulty obtaining funding from traditional sources.

You can help Ground Zero win more grants. We are looking for volunteers with grant/proposal writing to skills to help with some exciting projects. Interested? Please contact office for details.

# There really is a CURE !! *...and here's how you can get it...*

*Reprinted form Ground Zero Newsletter, July 1993*

**The largest, most visible civil rights event in history of Colorado is in its planning stages even as you read this !** The Colorado Springs Minority Coalition is teaming up with local and national civil rights leadership to put the state of Colorado back on the map as a state with the ability to lead the country in civil rights. Together, local and national leaders have determined that the single most important move for Colorado is an **enormous rally** to signify the necessity of **unity and coalition** in the increasingly difficult struggle to promote human rights in the county.

**The Colorado Unity Rally for Equality (C.U.R.E.)** will be held all day, Oct 3, 1993, in Memorial Park, Colorado Springs, Colorado. There will be an introductory welcome, followed by a 12 block march to downtown Colorado Springs and the City Administration Buildings and back to Memorial Park. Upon returning to the park, a series of national leaders will speak, including the possibilities of Ben Chavez (NAACP), Tori Osborn, (NGLTF), Maya Angelou (Feminist Poet), Russel Means (AIM), Elie Weisel, (Jewish leader), Sgt. Jose Zuniga, (U.S. Army), Governor Lowell Weicker of Connecticut, Evelyn Hu-DeHart (Dir. Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race, Colorado University) and many more. These speeches will be interspersed with a variety of national and local entertainers. Vendors will be licensed to sell food, beverage and other merchandise.

In addition, contact has been made with Colorado Governor Roy Romer's office, discussing the details of Governor Romer declaring **1994 the Year of Diversity in Colorado** . Thus far, the reaction from the Governor's office has been enthusiastic. If the Governor does more ahead and make such a declaration, it will be publicly announced for the first time at the **UNITY RALLY**. Furthermore, depending on the final decision from the Governor, plans are under way to ask President Clinton to declare a similar proclamation for **1994 as the Year of Diversity in the United States** .

The **CURE RALLY** is intended to bring leadership from all major civil rights movements to one location to present a similar **educational** message to those organizing at the grassroots level: **"The time has come for all minorities to work together to bring about significant progress in civil rights!"** It is apparent that society-at-large and most governmental bodies are ineffective at eliminating institutionalized discrimination against minorities at every level of society. It is further apparent that the attack against gays and lesbians in Colorado and across the country is inextricably tied to a larger attack against all minorities which is being orchestrated from the Far Right. For these reasons and many more, the Colorado Springs Minority Coalition believes that it is imperative that the message be proclaimed that **the <u>only</u> effective way to achieve progress in the arena of civil rights is to work in coalition.**

Expectations are that individuals, groups and organizations will attend the rally in unprecedented numbers. March organizers expect tens of thousands of participants from diverse backgrounds to be in attendance. A statewide coordinator will work to ensure representation from across the state. Additionally, the inclusion of nationally recognized and diverse entertainers coupled with prominent civil rights leaders should guarantee that this event will be one of the biggest, if not the biggest civil rights events in the history of Colorado.

## So..... mark your calendars for October 3, 1993.....

**The C.U.R.E. Ralley plans grow larger every day, contact the office if you would like to help. And look for the latest information on the Ralley in the October News letter.**

### Ask the Editor...

**Q;** Why are the names of people in the newsletter so cryptic? I have a hard time figuring out who you are talking about sometimes.

**A:** The Networking Commitee, which publishes the Ground Zero Newsletter each month, decided early on in the organizational meetings to protect the privacy of all individuals. Our policy is to print first name and last-name initial, unless prseviously released by the individual. It is unfortunate that we must have a policy, but even this editor was affected after Amendment 2 passed, and had to obtain a private phone number.

**Q:** My newsletter never seems to get to my address, what can I do?

**A;** The Networking is currently updating the mailing list . If you are not receiving your newsletter, or have changed your address, please contact us through the Ground Zero office to update. There will soon be a nation-wide subscription drive, so watch your mailbox for details.

*We welcome your questions and will do our best to reply....*

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